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AUTHOR Bos, Ronald R.; Zakrajsek, Dorothy B.
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ABSTRACT

This study compares student assessment of teaching performance and course effectiveness among three groups of instructors in a university basic instruction physical education program: the main campus faculty, the regional campus faculty, and main campus graduate assistants. The students rated faculty on (1) knowledge, clarity, and enthusiasm; (2) organization and preparation; (3) instructor-student interaction and rapport; and (4) general evaluation of performance. The results indicated: (1) students perceived the main campus faculty to be more effective than graduate assistants in knowledge, clarity, and enthusiasm; (2) students perceived both main and regional campus faculty to be better organized and prepared than graduate assistants; and (3) students perceived no significant difference among the faculty groups on instructor-student interaction and rapport. The results show little difference in teaching effectiveness of activity instruction between main campus and regional campus or between regional campus faculty and graduate assistants in overall instructional effectiveness. Course effectiveness was viewed across the experimental instruction groups as not different. (Author)

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A COMPARISON OF STUDENT ASSESSMENT OF ACTIVITY INSTRUCTION AMONG THREE FACULTY GROUPS

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Ronald R. Bos, Associate Dean
School of Health, Physical Education and Recreation
Kent State University

and

Dorothy B. Zakrajsek, Chairman
Department of Physical Education
Kent State University

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Introduction

Student assessment of teaching effectiveness in basic instruction physical education programs has received minimal attention in the professional literature. With the exception of the communication of Colvin and Roundy (2), no recent publication focuses on student ratings of activity instruction. Likewise, the availability of such rating scales, specific to physical education activities, has been limited.

In contrast, the literature describing and analyzing student ratings of traditional classroom instruction has been abundant. This literature, in general, is quite consistent in identifying those teaching behaviors which students perceive as important in classroom instruction (3,4,5,7,10,11,14,15 and 16). The sum total of these perceptions indicates that the following characteristics are deemed most important to students: knowledge of subject matter, clarity, instructor enthusiasm, organization and preparation, and instructor-student interaction and rapport. These traits make up the major portion of the Instructional Assessment Inventory utilized in this study. In addition, overall evaluative items that have common applicability across a range of course content were included in the inventory.

The reasons attributed to the ongoing evaluation of faculty instruction and the uses of the information derived therefrom have been, over the years, quite apparent. However, these reasons are taking on new dimensions. In the last few years, budget limitations and priorities have increasingly caused the

replacement of teaching faculty with graduate assistants in the basic instruction program. A measure of the effectiveness of this replacement is important since the basic instruction program continues to be the "bread and butter" of the total physical education program.

Faculty, not graduate assistants, continue to serve as the entire instructional force in the regional or satellite campuses. The evaluation of this instruction is significant in that the regional campus faculty are considered an extension of the main campus department, thereby relying upon the decision making process of that department for their reappointment, tenure, and promotion. In addition, they operate quite autonomously and are substantially removed from the influence of direct supervision.

The aforementioned instructional, administrative, and economic factors compel a critical review of teaching and course effectiveness as perceived by the consumer--the student. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to compare student assessment of teaching performance and course effectiveness among three groups of physical education instructors in a university basic instruction program. Main campus faculty, regional campus faculty and main campus graduate assistants comprised the three teaching populations.

Methodology

The Instructional Assessment Inventory utilized in the research described herein was developed on the basis of an extensive review of the literature pertaining to student evaluation of instruction in many academic fields. The

resulting instrument (see Appendix) consisted of 20 items comprising four sub-sections. Three sub-sections focused on (1) "Knowledge, Clarity and Enthusiasm," (2) "Organization and Preparation," and (3) "Instructor-Student Interaction and Rapport." The fourth, "General Evaluation," included the overall evaluative items.

Student evaluations were completed by 1,010 students in university basic instruction physical education classes during the Spring and Fall Quarters of 1977. These students were enrolled in 33 different activities (Table 1) which were taught by 56 independent instructors. These instructors administered the inventory to the students during the last week of regular classes or at the final examination meeting of the class. At the close of the session in which the inventory was given, the completed data forms were collected by a designated student and forwarded to the department chairman for analysis.

TABLE 1

ACTIVITIES EVALUATED BY BASIC INSTRUCTION STUDENTS

Archery	Folk Dance	Rugby
Badminton	Golf	Self-Defense
Ballet	Gymnastics	Senior Life Saving
Ballroom	Handball	Slimquatics
Basketball	Ice Skating	Soccer
Billiards	Karate	Square Dance
Bowling	Jogging	Swimming
Cycling	Judo	Tennis
Fencing	Modern Dance	Volleyball
Figure Skating	Modern Jazz	Water Safety Instructor
Fitness	Racquetball	Weight Training

Results

The data from the 1,010 evaluations were subjected to an ANOVA to compare the instructional effectiveness of the three experimental groups: (1) main campus faculty (Main), (2) regional campus faculty (Reg.), and (3) main campus graduate assistants (G.A.). Where significant F-ratios were obtained (.05 level), multiple t-tests were utilized to make comparisons of the paired mean scores of the three groups. The .01 level of probability was used as the benchmark of significance for the t-tests.

The analysis of the data centered around the four sub-sections of the Instructional Assessment Inventory. Within each of these sub-sections there is a measure of homogeneity in content, thus they are logical divisions for analysis and discussion. Table 2 summarizes the data analysis for sub-section I, which focuses on subject matter knowledge and clarity of instruction, as well as the personal interest and enthusiasm of the instructor. The ANOVA on the composite means of all items in this sub-section indicates that students perceived the main campus faculty to be more effective than graduate assistants in the knowledge, clarity, and enthusiasm dimension of instruction. This composite or overall difference was primarily the result of significant differences for two specific items, 6 and 7, within the sub-section. The data from these items indicate that main campus faculty were more effective than graduate assistants in terms of motivating students and teaching skilled performers.

TABLE 2

Comparison of Faculty Groups in "Knowledge, Clarity, & Enthusiasm"

Section/Items	Means	F-Ratios	t-Ratios
Section I - Knowledge, Clarity, Enthusiasm	Main 31.40 Reg. 30.85 G.A. 30.59	3.35*	Main-Reg. 1.61 Main-G.A. 2.77** Reg.-G.A. .76
1. The instructor effectively explained or demonstrated the skills of the activity.	Main 4.58 Reg. 4.39 G.A. 4.43	4.49**	Main-Reg. 2.75** Main-G.A. 2.48 Reg.-G.A. .68
2. The instructor was perceptive in diagnosing and skillful in correcting individual errors in performance.	Main 4.37 Reg. 4.37 G.A. 4.27	1.83	
3. The instructor clearly explained the rules, scoring and strategies involved in the activity.	Main 4.25 Reg. 4.38 G.A. 4.24	2.34	
4. The instructor was enthusiastic and interested in teaching the subject matter.	Main 4.12 Reg. 4.11 G.A. 4.00	1.74	
5. The instructor demonstrated a comprehensive knowledge of the activity.	Main 4.59 Reg. 4.48 G.A. 4.57	1.93	
6. The instructor encouraged and motivated you to attain a higher skill level.	Main 4.74 Reg. 4.63 G.A. 4.60	3.96*	Main-Reg. 2.00 Main-G.A. 2.83** Reg.-G.A. .57
7. The instructor seemed capable of teaching the more highly skilled performers.	Main 4.39 Reg. 4.29 G.A. 4.21	4.54**	Main-Reg 1.58 Main-G.A. 3.13** Reg.-G.A. 1.23

*Indicates significance at .05 level.
**Indicates significance at .01 level.

Table 3 is the analysis of the student ratings of class organization and preparation for each of the instructional groups. The overall analysis of this sub-section indicates that the composite mean scores for both main campus faculty and regional campus faculty were significantly greater than the mean scores for graduate assistants. Of the five individual items comprising this section: (item 8) communication of objectives, assignments, and evaluative information; (item 10) provision for active participation; and (item 11) the value of instructional materials, were more effectively incorporated

TABLE 3

Comparison of Faculty Groups in "Organization & Preparation"

Section/Items	Means	F-Ratios	t-Ratios
Section II - Organization & Preparation	Main 21.50 Reg. 21.95 G.A. 20.95	10.79**	Main-Reg. 2.03 Main-G.A. 2.63** Reg.-G.A. 4.35**
8. The instructor provided, verbally or via a course outline, the course objectives, expectations, assignments, examination information and grading procedures.	Main 4.55 Reg. 4.44 G.A. 4.30	9.14**	Main-Reg. 1.78 Main-G.A. 4.36** Reg.-G.A. 2.19
9. The instructor's lessons reflected planned learning sessions and efficient utilization of class time.	Main 4.43 Reg. 4.49 G.A. 4.43	.54	
10. Within the limitations of the facilities, the instructor provided maximal active participation time for all students.	Main 4.47 Reg. 4.36 G.A. 4.22	8.71**	Main-Reg. 1.61 Main-G.A. 4.34** Reg.-G.A. 2.22
11. The textbook and other instructional materials were of value in the course.	Main 4.68 Reg. 4.60 G.A. 4.54	3.31*	Main-Reg. 1.41 Main-G.A. 2.62** Reg.-G.A. 1.05
12. A safe learning environment was provided for the class.	Main. 3.35 Reg. 3.79 G.A. 3.34	14.02**	Main-Reg. 4.72** Main-G.A. .04 Reg.-G.A. 4.80**

*Indicates significance at .05 level.
**Indicates significance at .01 level.

into the classes by main campus faculty than by graduate assistants. Of the remaining items in this sub-section, the students perceived a safe activity environment to be more prevalent in the regional campus classes than on the main campus.

Sub-section III of the Instructional Assessment Inventory, containing questions dealing with instructor-student interaction and rapport, is summarized in Table 4. The ANOVA of the means for all items within this sub-section reveals no significant difference among the three experimental groups. However, in spite of the "no difference" overall, one item, number 13, did yield a significant difference among the mean scores. Both the main campus faculty and the regional campus faculty were perceived by students to be significantly better

TABLE 4

Comparison of Faculty Groups in "Student Interaction & Rapport"

Section/Items	Means	F-Ratios	t-Ratios
Section III - Student Interaction & Rapport	Main 17.49 Reg. 17.47 G.A. 17.10	2.46	
13. The instructor provided evaluative feedback concerning your skill development.	Main 4.58 Reg. 4.70 G.A. 4.41	14.38**	Main-Reg. 2.30 Main-G.A. 3.00** Reg.-G.A. 5.08**
14. The instructor was impartial and fair in dealing with students.	Main 4.59 Reg. 4.57 G.A. 4.48	2.09	
15. The instructor was interested in you and your skill development.	Main 4.32 Reg. 4.32 G.A. 4.28	.23	
16. The instructor was understanding of and helpful to students who experienced difficulty acquiring the activity skills.	Main 4.44 Reg. 4.45 G.A. 4.33	2.90	

*Indicates significance at .05 level.
**Indicates significance at .01 level.

than graduate assistants in providing evaluative feedback.

The final reporting, Table 5, indicates that the three experimental groups were not viewed differently by students in terms of the "General Evaluation" of course effectiveness, although instructional effectiveness, as measured by item 20, as differentiated from course effectiveness as measured by items 17, 18, and 19, was assessed as superior in the main campus faculty.

In summary, the results show virtually no differences in teaching effectiveness of activity instruction between main campus and regional campus faculty or between regional campus faculty and graduate assistants, as viewed by students. The results do indicate that main campus faculty are perceived by students as superior to graduate assistants in overall instructional effectiveness. However, this instructional

TABLE 5

Comparison of Faculty Groups in "General Evaluation"

Section/Items	Means	F-Ratios	t-ratios
Section IV - General Evaluation	Main 18.11 Reg. 18.15 G.A. 17.89	1.22	
17. Fun and enjoyment were experienced throughout the course.	Main 4.46 Reg. 4.58 G.A. 4.48	2.34	
18. Based on your experience in this course, would you enroll in another physical education course and/or recommend activity courses to others?	Main 4.52 Reg. 4.58 G.A. 4.55	.43	
19. Considering all aspects of the course, how would you rate this course?	Main 4.46 Reg. 4.42 G.A. 4.35	2.26	
20. Considering all of the instructional aspects of this course, how would you rate the instructor?	Main. 4.67 Reg. 4.57 G.A. 4.51	5.23**	Main-Reg. 1.87 Main-G.A. 3.37** Reg.-G.A. 1.17

*Indicates significance at .05 level.
**Indicates significance at .01 level.

superiority did not carry over to students' perception of course effectiveness. Course effectiveness was viewed across the experimental instructional groups as no different.

Discussion

The mean ratings for each of the twenty items comprising the four sub-sections of the Instructional Assessment Inventory were generally high (means 3.34 to 4.74). Although the differences among the three faculty experimental groups on these items were modest, these differences were not only statistically significant but also surprisingly consistent. On seven of the twenty items, the main campus faculty were rated significantly higher than the graduate assistants. The reverse, graduate assistants rated higher than main campus faculty, never occurred.

The high mean ratings, item for item, appear indicative of quality instruction. However, high ratings are not necessarily a guarantee of effective teaching, although it would be rare that truly effective teaching would receive low student ratings. Nevertheless, it is worth noting various factors that influence rating levels.

Classroom studies (1,3) have shown that students in elective courses tend to rate course and teacher effectiveness higher. Since the majority of the students involved in this study were enrolled for elective credit, that factor may have contributed to the high assessment level.

Possibly, many students, enrolled in the activity classes included in this study, experienced less than quality secondary physical education programs which left them with relatively low expectations for such activity instruction and, in turn, led to a lack of differentiation between good and superior teaching.

The skill achievement aspiration level of activity students may also be noteworthy. If students set skill goals that are easily attainable and thus attained, then it seems logical to assume that teacher and course effectiveness would be perceived quite favorably.

Still another factor, administrative procedures, may have influenced rating levels. Sheehan (17) warns that faculty administered rating scales could positively influence rating scores, while Doyle (6) suggests that an instructor's absence from the classroom during the student evaluation might result in more representative assessment. Two supportive studies

(9, 12) agree that higher ratings of instruction were achieved when the instructor administered the evaluative instrument.

To gain further insight into the factors which may affect rating levels, a series of studies is planned which will, in effect, partial out the contributing factors.

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Appendix

INSTRUCTIONAL ASSESSMENT INVENTORY

Knowledge - Clarity - Enthusiasm

1. The instructor effectively explained or demonstrated the skills of the activity.

INEFFECTIVE A B C D E VERY EFFECTIVE

2. The instructor was perceptive in diagnosing and skillful in correcting individual errors in performance.

OBLIVIOUS/NOT HELPFUL A B C D E PERCEPTIVE/HELPFUL

3. The instructor clearly explained the rules, scoring and strategies involved in the activity. (May not apply to dance, gymnastics, skating, etc.).

VAGUELY A B C D E CLEARLY

4. The instructor was enthusiastic and interested in teaching the subject matter.

APATHETIC A B C D E ENTHUSIASTIC

5. The instructor demonstrated a comprehensive knowledge of the activity.

UNINFORMED A B C D E VERY KNOWLEDGEABLE

6. The instructor encouraged and motivated you to attain a higher skill level.

UNCONCERNED A B C D E VERY PERSUASIVE

7. The instructor seemed capable of teaching the more highly skilled performers.

INCAPABLE A B C D E VERY CAPABLE

Organization and Preparation

8. The instructor provided, verbally or via a course outline, the course objectives, expectations, assignments, examination information and grading procedures.

UNDEFINED A B C D E CLEARLY DEFINED

9. The instructor's lessons reflected planned learning sessions and efficient utilization of class time.

DISORGANIZED A B C D E WELL PLANNED

10. Within the limitations of the facilities, the instructor provided maximal active participation time for all students.

INACTIVE A B C D E VERY ACTIVE

11. The textbook and other instructional materials were of value in the course.

NO BENEFIT A B C D E VERY VALUABLE

12. A safe learning environment was provided for the class.

HARMFUL A B C D E VERY SAFE

Instructor-Student Interaction & Rapport

13. The instructor provided evaluative feedback concerning your skill development.

UNINFORMATIVE A B C D E INFORMATIVE

14. The instructor was impartial and fair in dealing with students.

UNFAIR A B C D E VERY FAIR

15. The instructor was interested in you and your skill development.

DISINTERESTED A B C D E VERY INTERESTED

16. The instructor was understanding of and helpful to students who experienced difficulty acquiring the activity skills.

NO HELP A B C D E VERY HELPFUL

General Evaluation

17. Fun and enjoyment were experienced throughout the course.

BORING A B C D E VERY ENJOYABLE

18. Based on your experience in this course, would you enroll in another physical education course and/or recommend activity courses to others?

ABSOLUTELY NOT A B C D E DEFINITELY

19. Considering all aspects of the course, how would you rate this course?

POOR A B C D E EXCELLENT

20. Considering all of the instructional aspects of this course, how would you rate the instructor?

POOR A B C D E EXCELLENT